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Executive Registry
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Republican
National
Committee

Bill Brock
Chairman

August 8, 1979

[redacted]
Brock, Bill
(originator GOP)

The Honorable Barry Goldwater
U. S. Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

Dear Barry:

I reread the morning Post article to be sure that my memory was not faulty in what I said about our intelligence capabilities. It was the Post that said this will likely become a major campaign issue in 1980 - I did not.

What I did do was express serious concern with the impact of a whole range of laws passed in the last four or five years upon our intelligence services. I did express serious concern about the proliferation of Congressional oversight committees and the possibility that our oversight could be fragmented, suggesting as an alternative, the formation of a Joint Committee on Intelligence to pull all these threads into one fabric. I did express concern with the way Carter has handled intelligence, particularly his repudiation of the Intelligence Advisory Board.

You are aboslutely right in suggesting that we should have conferred with the Republicans on the Intelligence Committee before making this statement. I have not been involved in the development of the statement which has been under study for the last year. Our Committee members told me that they had made contact with a number of Members of Congress and with Intelligence Committee staff. Regardless of that, I apologize for not having called you directly on this matter. That was an oversight and no one else is responsible other than myself.

Further, I obviously value your opinion that our intelligence is as good as there is in the world, and that morale is improving. I pray that is the case and that it will continue. It is hard, though, to ignore the burden being placed on the FBI and the CIA by the Freedom of Information and Privacy Acts. If I recall correctly, it was CIA which said that they were spending more money answering requests under those acts than they were in some vitally important intelligence areas. I think that's a shame. It also hard to ignore the findings in the General Accounting Office study of the FBI and the reduction of the number of informants willing to cooperate with that agency.

In sum, I had no intention of tearing down our intelligence gathering. Rather, I hope to provide it with some vocal support, and to draw attention to the need for extensive hearings before a new charter, which has the capacity of either doing great good or great harm, is finally adopted for the CIA.

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Anyway I hate being awry with you on any issue. When I find myself in that position, my first reaction is to check my own premise, because I rarely find yours in error. Under the circumstances, I shall do that in this case, and I thank you for your letter.

I do hope you're doing well. Miss seeing you.

Very truly yours,

BILL BROCK

BB:cb

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